AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application:

1.-22. (canceled)

23. (Presently Amended) A method of increasing tissue volume in a subject, said method comprising injecting a composition in or near said tissue in need of volume increase, said composition comprising microparticles of cross-linked alginate, wherein said microparticles of alginate are crosslinked with a divalent or polyvalent cation, and wherein said alginate, prior to said crosslinking, has a molecular weight of between about 100kDa and about 1200kDa.

24. (Canceled)

25. (Canceled)

26. (Canceled)

27. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said tissue is skin.

28. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said tissue is muscle tissue.

29. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 28, wherein said muscle tissue is a sphincter muscle.

30. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the sphincter muscle is the lower esophageal sphincter muscle.

31. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 29, wherein the sphincter muscle is the inner sphincter muscle of the bladder.

32. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said composition comprises potassium or sodium alginate.

33. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said divalent or polyvalent cation is barium.

34. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 33, wherein said microparticles of alginate are crosslinked with barium and at least one additional cation.

35. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 34, wherein said at least one additional cation is calcium.

36. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said divalent or polyvalent cation is calcium.

37. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 36, wherein said microparticles of alginate are crosslinked with calcium and at least one additional cation.

38. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said composition further comprises at least one additional compound selected from the group consisting of vitamins, adhesion proteins, anti-inflammatory substances, antibiotics, growth factors, hormones, nutrients, and cells.

39. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 or 33, wherein the composition further comprises a pharmaceutical carrier.

40. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23 or 33, wherein the diameter of said microparticles is from about 20 to about 2000μm.

41. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, further comprising injecting at least one solution selected from the group consisting of a citrate solution and a solution of a complexing agent.

42. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 23, wherein said alginate is present in solution at a concentration of about 0.1% to about 4% (w/v).

43. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said composition further comprises a physiological carrier.

44. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said alginate is crosslinked *in situ*, said *in situ* crosslinking comprising injecting a solution comprising barium or calcium salt at said injection site.

45. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said crosslinking solution is co-injected with said alginate composition.

46. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 44, wherein said crosslinking solution is injected after said alginate composition is injected.

47. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 42, wherein said alginate solution further comprises D-glucono-δ-lactone and at least one compound selected from the group consisting of barium carbonate and calcium carbonate.

48. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 47, further comprising injecting EDTA or citrate solution after said injection of said alginate composition.

49. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 41, wherein the solution of a complexing agent comprises EDTA.